

that most women will not have to be put in a situation where they have to choose. So, I ask my Republican colleagues to join me in supporting the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, which will provide the needed access to affordable health care and contraceptives and in doing so, not put women in the position where they have to consider abortion.

HONORING NEW JERSEY'S PROUD AGRICULTURAL TRADITION AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF FARMS LOCATED IN THE 11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2012

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize New Jersey's proud agricultural tradition and the contribution of farms located in our 11th Congressional District.

The prospering agricultural industry of today's New Jersey is the continuation of many years of farming dating back to colonial settlement in the sixteenth century. Primarily a rural society, struggling settlers developed small family farms to stave off starvation. Soon local farms not only became an important source of fruits, vegetables, and grain, but also for raw materials used for the prospering textile industry. Easy access to cotton, wool, and other farm products fueled the Industrial Revolution in New Jersey. Agriculture became not only a very profitable industry on its own, but also fed secondary manufacturing and merchant businesses.

Every day, farmers across the state raise animals, harvest vegetables, pick fruit, and participate in the 400 year old tradition that built New Jersey into an economic powerhouse.

Today, New Jersey agriculture constitutes an \$82 billion industry that provides a strong backbone for New Jersey's economy. It also benefits surrounding businesses with the growing popularity of agrotourism. This extremely successful business model involves enticing people from near and far to visit, learn about everyday farm-life, and participate in activities such as pumpkin, wine tasting, hay rides, petting zoos, or horseback riding. This not only brings customers from the surrounding tri-state area to appreciate what New Jersey has to offer, but also fosters a greater public understanding of commercial farming. New Jersey's large agricultural sector provides employment, not only for farm workers, but also for those in construction for irrigation and drainage projects. This multibillion dollar industry supports New Jersey, providing jobs and raw materials, drawing in customers, and serving as its own lucrative business.

New Jersey truly is the Garden State, as our motto says. Having a strong agricultural industry not only provides a great deal of economic benefits to New Jersey, but also contributes to a rich social tapestry. There are over 790,000 acres of lands across the state devoted to farmland. This has been celebrated as an extremely environmentally friendly use of land that preserves both a smaller carbon footprint and the beautiful greenery characteristic of New Jersey. In a world where food insecurity remains one of the most dif-

ficult problems for mankind to combat, thriving agriculture reduces the acuteness of this issue and diminishes our dependence on food imports. This land also provides access to fresh, locally grown foods, giving residents in the area healthier meal options. The agricultural industry is unparalleled in its contributions to New Jersey society, providing jobs, tourism, environmental protection, food security, raw materials for manufacturing, and so much more.

Standing as a shining example of New Jersey's proud agricultural tradition is Wightman's Farms, located in Harding Township, Morris County. Celebrating their 90th Anniversary this year, Wightman's Farms has worked continuously to expand what began as a farm into the prospering business it is today. The farm is one of over 8,000 other family owned and operated farms in New Jersey that support their local and state economy. Currently managed by the third generation of Wightmans, the integration of tradition and innovation has certainly helped Wightman's Farms not only last the test of time, but develop into a flourishing business enjoyed by customers near and far.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in recognizing New Jersey's agricultural tradition and the contributions of 11th District farmers.

RECOGNIZING THE PORT OF SEATTLE FOR RECEIVING THE 2012 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE EMPLOYER SUPPORT FREEDOM AWARD

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2012

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Port of Seattle for receiving the 2012 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. The Port of Seattle is one of just fifteen employers across the country to receive this honor.

Each year, the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, an agency of the Department of Defense, awards employers with their annual Freedom Award. This is the Department of Defense's highest recognition awarded to employers for their exceptional support of Guard and Reserve employees. More than 3,000 nominations from Guardsmen and Reservists, or their family members on their behalf, were submitted and the Port of Seattle distinguished themselves among all the nominees.

A Naval Reservist nominated the Port of Seattle because of the Port's focus on hiring military members and veterans, as well as for their participation in the military's Transition Assistance Program. Twenty percent of the Port's employees have served in the military and the Port has started a fellowship program to help returning service members transition from active duty to the civilian workforce. The Port of Seattle's efforts at employing Guardsmen and Reservists serves as a model for other port districts that are establishing programs to hire more service members.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I honor the Port of Seattle for their superb treatment of Guard and Reserve employees. The Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is a well-deserved honor.

HONORING REPRESENTATIVE ELENA PARENT

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2012

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Georgia State Representative Elena Parent on the occasion of her retirement from the Georgia General Assembly. In her short time in the Georgia State House, Elena has made a profound impact on the Georgia Legislature, and I know that she will be missed by her constituents from the 81st District.

Outside of public office, Elena is incredibly involved in the Metro Atlanta community, currently serving on the Foundation Board of the Georgia Association of Women Lawyers, the Advisory Board of Directors of It's a Journey, Inc., and the Women and Minorities in the Profession Committee of the State Bar of Georgia. She has also conducted fundraising and development efforts for HOPE Atlanta, a homelessness-prevention non-profit. I commend her for such meaningful service to the people of Georgia.

Elena recently announced that she will begin working as the Executive Director of Georgia Watch, a consumer advocacy group, at the end of her term this year. Having already received numerous awards for her leadership, including inclusion in the Atlanta Business Chronicle's "40 Under 40," Elena is an excellent choice for this position, and I look forward to hearing of her successes in the future.

I wish Elena, her husband, Briley, and their son, Brooks, the very best.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SERVICE OF AUTUMN M. LEVA TO THE CONSTITUENTS OF COLORADO'S FIFTH DISTRICT

HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2012

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, it is with mixed emotions that I announce the departure of a valued member of my staff, Autumn M. Leva.

Autumn has served in my Washington D.C. office for the past year and a half, first as our Staff Assistant and most recently as my Executive Assistant, Scheduler, and Legislative Aide. She has successfully handled her duties with a wealth of knowledge of the legislative and procedural processes. Her dedication and work ethic will be very difficult to replace.

A longtime resident of Colorado's fifth Congressional District and a graduate of Salida High School, Autumn received her Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education with a minor in Spanish from the University of Montana in 2007 and went on to receive her Juris Doctor from Regent University School of Law in 2010. She is the daughter of Kathy Messick of Salida, Colorado and sister to Shane Leva.

Autumn's sparkling personality, enthusiastic can-do attitude, and team-player mentality will be truly missed. However, it is her love for the Lord that will be most remembered by myself